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any other notes which any future Congress may see fit to authorize in payment of their claims, and the work of providing a remedy will prove very easy. And until a sense of the exigency of the case is reached, no arrangement of plans for restoring specie payment can be expected to receive any effective support.

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#### ART. VII. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works of HENRY THOMAS BUCKLE.* Edited, with a Biographical Notice, by HELEN TAYLOR. In Three Volumes. London: Longmans, Green, & Co. 8vo. 1872.

BUCKLE'S History of Philosophy, unfinished as it is, certainly marks an epoch in historical literature. It was the first attempt, on a considerable scale, to apply to the concrete treatment of historical phenomena the laws that govern these phenomena, and by this means to bring history into the category of the exact sciences. Perhaps there is no one of these laws of which Buckle can be called, in any true sense of the word, the discoverer; although his demonstration of many of them is acute and exhaustive. His peculiar merit is that he brought them over, so to speak, from the domain of abstract philosophy into that of literature, and that he did this with a remarkable breadth and boldness of thought, and in so agreeable and lucid a style as to attract and hold attention. He was fortunate, too, in the time of bringing his book before the public, — when the community, having become accustomed to the scientific treatment of phenomena, and in a certain degree imbued with the scientific spirit, was ready to see this treatment applied to the facts of human experience. It only needed something for its opinions to crystallize about. The extraordinary sensation created by this book is therefore fully justified by the effects which we may fairly ascribe to it. Those views of the uniformity of law, the irresistible tendency of general causes, and the importance of physical geography in human development, which had before been confined to a few advanced thinkers, now passed into the public mind, and powerfully influenced even those who refused to believe in a *science* of history. As accepted principles of historical investigation, they may be said to date from the appearance of this work.

The publication of Mr. Buckle's lesser writings, — most of which have never seen the light before, — and of the materials that he had

been collecting for the purposes of his great undertaking, will be welcome, not only to his special admirers, but to all who are interested in historical study. The complete papers here given are in Mr. Buckle's most finished style, and contain discussions of permanent value. All of these three thick volumes, however, except a part of the first, are taken up with the miscellaneous materials — fragments and commonplace books — which he had been many years accumulating, and which will be found useful by all who desire to make a special study of any topic which came within Mr. Buckle's scope. We will especially instance the history of mediæval literature. But this publication has a further value in illustrating his methods of work, and enabling us to form a better judgment, both of what he actually accomplished and of what he probably would have accomplished if he had lived. In reading his history, the first impression is of an erudition at once so wide and so minute as to show that there was nothing contracted in his sympathies or the range of his inquiries. In these fragments and notes we are brought directly face to face with his materials, and are in a condition to judge fairly whether there were any such limitations.

In the first place, it will be noticed that Mr. Buckle was a great reader, but not a scholar. It ought not to be expected that a book which deals with the philosophy of results rather than with the investigation of details should exhibit special scholarship in every field, or perhaps even in any one. The peculiar requisite for such a task as this is the power of judging accurately of the special labors of others; one need not himself perform these special labors. Still it is probable that no person can judge accurately of the special labors of others, unless he has himself done similar work in some one department; to deal satisfactorily with general results, one must know from one's own experience how such results are reached. Now here, we imagine, is where a University education would have stood Mr. Buckle in stead. He appears never to have engaged in the special investigation of details, but to have reserved himself for the higher work of reasoning from these details. Consequently, the first and most fatal defect in his reasoning is the inadequacy of his materials; not in amount, of course, but in character. It has been pointed out, we believe, by adepts in the natural sciences, that the treatment of these subjects is often unsatisfactory from lack of special knowledge. This is no less true of special historical erudition, in which at least it might be expected that he would be strong.

Nothing is so striking, on glancing over these pages, as the very second-rate character of many of the books read and cited. We do not forget that these commonplace books were made fifteen or twenty years ago, and that many books which were authority then are so no

longer; but this does not account for the whole deficiency. For example: in 1856 a paper appeared in England which has completely revolutionized the science of mythology. Mr. Buckle died in 1862; but, although there are several extracts here upon mythological subjects, Max Müller is not even mentioned; Mr. Prichard is the principal authority upon this head, and the profound treatises of K. O. Müller, Gerhard, Preller, Hartung, and others appear never to have attracted Mr. Buckle's attention. In like manner Prichard is his authority for ancient Egypt; genuine Egyptologists, like Lepsius and Brugsch, he takes no notice of. Now nothing is more certain than that if a person is not himself a special student and authority upon the subjects of which he writes, he must at any rate know how to find and use those who are authorities.

Real scholarship—a Cambridge or Oxford training—would have saved Mr. Buckle from the wasted labor of copying out pages of worthless matter into these note-books, either facts that every scholar ought to be supposed to know, as the derivation of *Ostracism* (No. 220), or puerile derivations, such as that of *Paris* (No. 81). It is incredible that an historical student should take pains to note down the absurd derivation “from the son of Priam, king of Troy,” when the transformation of the name of an ancient tribe into a modern city is so common and well-understood an occurrence as to be almost a rule: Treveri into *Treves*, Turones into *Tours*, Remi into *Rheims*, Parisii into *Paris*. It is, by the way, remarkable how very little use Mr. Buckle makes of any but English and French writers; he read, we are told, half a dozen languages, but we find very few traces of them in these “Commonplace Books.”

So much for the character of the materials. As regards their scope, there are two or three wide fields of inquiry directly connected with his subject, in which he appears to have taken no interest. *Institutions*, for instance, he hardly notices; nor that wide class of subjects which Mr. Maine's and Mr. Tylor's books have made familiar to English readers. To be sure, both of these have written since Mr. Buckle; but the subject of primitive thought and customs, it would seem, could not fail to engage the attention of a philosophic student of civilization more than we find traces of here. We have already spoken of mythology,—a branch of this subject which was well developed in his lifetime, but on which we find only a very few notes of very little value.

This leads us to the limits to which Mr. Buckle, unconsciously, no doubt, confined himself, and within which he did excellent service. By a history of civilization he meant a history of modern society. He

took society as he found it in the sixteenth century, with very little and very inadequate study of the causes that brought it to that state. Starting from this, he followed out its development in the three centuries of modern history with remarkable power of analysis and breadth of view. Broad as it was, however, his view was not quite complete. Institutions, as we have said, possessed little interest for him. The entire range of events to which history usually confines itself too much he sedulously neglects, and flies into the opposite extreme of underrating their importance. But surely courts and camps, organized institutions and formal statutes, although they are not the sole objects worthy of attention, as our ancestors thought, are yet a part of society, and a very potent part.

This one-sidedness, a reaction from the one-sidedness of earlier historians, is manifested especially in two directions, — in insisting overmuch upon the influence of general tendencies, to the exclusion of special and personal agencies; and in the exaggerated importance ascribed to physical as contrasted with moral and intellectual considerations. It is not that Mr. Buckle consciously ignored either personal agencies or moral considerations; he insists as strongly as one could wish upon the practical superiority of the higher part of man's nature; and again, no small part of his work — and perhaps the most generally interesting — is devoted to an admirable analysis of the character and abilities of distinguished men, and the determination of the amount and kind of influence that they exerted. Nowhere does there exist a finer and more generous tribute to John Stuart Mill than in the review of his "*Liberty*," in the first of these three volumes. Nevertheless, Mr. Buckle is perhaps the foremost advocate of the theory that history is subject to laws as rigid as those which govern physical phenomena, and that the ablest man is impotent against the great movements of the race. Undoubtedly we must admit in the abstract that these human, intellectual influences are ultimately subject to law; but among these influences is that mighty power which we call, whether rightly or not, *Free Will*, — a fact which we cannot go behind, and the influence of which in human development has been incalculable. Perhaps the time will come when this, too, will be sifted and analyzed, and every event of history shown to be produced by the operation of exact laws; but at present all that we can say is, that at various epochs in the world's history there has appeared among mankind an exceptional nature, which has excited an extraordinary influence upon its generation, and thus upon all future time. It is merely begging the question to say that these heroes of history appeared when the world was ripe for them, and that if they had not done the work somebody else would. There is no

more fallacious belief than that the man will come when the need is ; the truth is — and it is one of the saddest truths of human history — that it is very seldom the Luther, Washington, or William the Silent appears when he is wanted. Mr. Buckle says, “Whoever is accustomed to generalize, smiles within himself when he hears that Luther brought about the Reformation ; . . . that William III. saved our liberties, etc.” It certainly seems to us, looking back now, that even without Luther the advance of human thought would have forced the Reformation ; but, so far as we can see, circumstances were ripe for reform a hundred years before, and even in the sixteenth century any reformer of less vigorous genius than Luther must have met the fate of Huss. Even as it is, the advance of human thought was effectively crushed in Italy and Spain. Again, how do we know that the coalition that expelled James II. in 1688 could have held together a day but for the one man, William of Orange ? Mr. Buckle’s words would seem to mean that any nation that needs liberty will be sure to have it.

On the other point Mr. Buckle admits in theory the superiority of moral influences, but uses expressions strangely inconsistent with it, when it comes to the special case. “It may be broadly laid down that neither in the sixteenth century nor at any other period has any great revolution been permanently effected except with the view of remedying some palpable and physical evils” (Vol. I. p. 106). And more positively, “The history of the world shows that there has never been a revolution except when the people were groaning under the burden of taxation” (Vol. III. p. 633). Now Mr. Buckle did not really mean this, for he knew perfectly well that some of the greatest revolutions of history were wrought under the influence of religious excitement ; and that, under this excitement, a community will submit to any physical suffering and deprivation without a word of complaint. But, while he knew and admitted this truth, his temper and turn of thought led his mind to dwell almost exclusively on physical causes. We find, too, in these passages, an illustration of an occasional habit of overstatement, which is, perhaps, his only fault of style. When he wishes to present a point very strongly, he permits himself hard and exaggerated expressions, which fit the mood he is then in, but which do not represent his real opinions. When, without qualification, he calls Mr. Justice Coleridge “an unjust and unrighteous judge,” and dwells upon his “cold heart and shallow understanding” (Vol. I. pp. 60 and 62), he repeats precisely the fallacy that the Abolitionists were guilty of when they denied that a slaveholder could have any virtues. Nor would he in any other connection have said of Irenæus, Tertullian, and Cyprian that their “antiquity was the only possible claim they could

have to respect" (id. p. 189); nor have called the great cathedrals of Europe "trifles" (id. p. 110).

In short, Mr. Buckle is an intolerant writer. He starts dogmatically from the position of a democrat and secularist of the nineteenth century,—a position with which we have no fault to find,—and relentlessly applies the standard of this position to earlier times. Now it is perfectly legitimate, in a history of civilization, that a writer should emphasize with sympathy whatever in an earlier age was working towards the result which appears to him right and desirable; and, on the other hand, should point out facts which are unfavorable in this regard. But to do this well, one must be able to appreciate and sympathize intellectually with opinions and tempers with which one does not agree; and this Mr. Buckle cannot do. For instance, in the fragment on Queen Elizabeth, he has scraped together whatever he could find in disparagement of the clergy of that time, till one might believe there was not a particle of virtue or ability among them, which is what Mr. Buckle would have been glad to believe. Again, it is a very superficial explanation of the Dark Ages to say that they were caused by the Christians shutting up the schools of Greece (Vol. I. p. 170), and the remark displays a judgment as blind to the real good wrought by the Church of that age as it is unjust in holding it responsible for evil.

By reason of the deficiencies here pointed out, we doubt whether Mr. Buckle, even if he had lived, would have written *the* history of civilization in England. The fragment that he published is of great and permanent value as an exhaustive discussion of certain aspects of human progress, the bearings of which upon the general history of mankind had never until then been thoroughly analyzed. Perhaps this fragment contains the principal general philosophy of the subject; although the detailed application of his theories would have possessed great value, and we as a people shall never cease to lament that he could not carry out his purpose of living among us long enough to subject our institutions and national tendencies to his masterly analysis. From a very different point of view from De Tocqueville's, he would have reached conclusions probably no less acute and instructive.

It may be worth while to quote a fine passage in which the doctrine is laid down, which, as we have said, he did not always recognize in practice: "In England, physical science not only *drew off* men from history, but gave them a *wrong pattern* to write it by. They said that in physics external and visible phenomena were everything, and they fancied the same held good in history. They did not know that the most important facts in history are invisible. The external world is

governed by *acts*, the internal world by opinions. In physics actions produce their effects, whether they are known or not; in history they only produce their effects *if* they are known. Every great historical revolution has been preceded by a corresponding intellectual revolution" (Vol. I. p. 213). On page 119 we find a very neat expression of his habit of thought: "The rebellion of the Stuarts against the authority of the nation."

The Biographical Notice contains a very interesting account of Mr. Buckle's life and habits. The intellectual habits that produced so powerful a book and so remarkable a style deserve the careful study of all readers. We will only add that Messrs. Scribner, Welford, and Armstrong have imported a special edition of this work, in recognition of the profound impression made in this country by the History of Civilization.

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2. — *The Issues of American Politics. A Discussion of the Principal Questions incident to the Governmental Polity of the United States, embracing the Subjects of Amnesty, Force Legislation, Civil Service, Suffrage, The Centralization of Power, Our Money and Currency, The Public Debt, The National Banking System, Reconstruction, The Constitutional Amendments, Tariffs, Taxation, Protection and Free-Trade, and other important Topics. An Exhaustive Treatise upon American Politics.* By ORRIN SKINNER (of the New York Bar). Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1873.

MR. SKINNER'S ambitious title-page is perhaps a sufficient criticism of his work, for it will give the reader as good an idea of the book and of the author's characteristics as anything we can write. His confidence that in a single volume of five or six hundred pages he has exhausted the science of government, indicates certainly a sanguine temperament, but hardly a proper appreciation of his subject, and possibly excuses our suspicion that he has not yet reached that period of life among whose chief advantages, according to the Rev. Homer Wilbur, is this: "That we attach a less inordinate value to our own productions, and, distrusting daily more and more our own wisdom (with the conceit whereof at twenty we wrap ourselves away from knowledge as with a garment), do reconcile ourselves with the wisdom of God." He tells us that his book was suggested by the fact that within the last twenty-five years "American literature in a *single* work has not attempted to solve the issues of American politics," and that it was written to supply this deficiency. Did it never occur to him that no one man can "solve" those issues, and that of the able men who in